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RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7378
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USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERIAL/WTO
TALKS - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Wednesday morning's Asahi gave top play to a fact-finding report by the South Korean government alleging that the KCIA was directly involved in the abduction of then opposition leader Kim Dae Jung from a Tokyo hotel in August 1973.

1. "ASEAN Looks to Help to Resolve North Korean Issues" Kuala Lumpur correspondent Hanada of the top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri commented (7/26): "The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in a joint statement issued at the end of its foreign ministerial, expressed concern over the recent North Korean launch of ballistic missiles.... ASEAN also adopted a special statement that termed the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula indispensable for the peace and stability of the region and called for the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to be utilized in seeking a peaceful solution. Given that Vietnam and other Southeast Asian nations have close relations with the DPRK, this expression of misgivings regarding North Korea's missile and nuclear programs represents still greater pressure on Pyongyang."

2. "Is Free Trade Dead?" The business-oriented Nihon Keizai editorialized (7/26): "The WTO's Doha Round foundered as a meeting of trade ministers from the US, Japan, and the EU broke down, with the goal of concluding the Round by year's end effectively being abandoned. The multilateral framework for free global trade is now facing a crisis. At a recent ministerial in Geneva, criticism was directed mainly at the US, which was less than enthusiastic about reducing government subsidies for agricultural products. But it is of no use to debate who was most to blame for the breakdown of the meeting. All the countries involved bear responsibility for the

failure.

13. "The political leaders of these nations must take a hard look in the mirror and realize that the free trade system is the basis for growth in the global economy. They should reflect on whether they grasp the importance of free trade and showed leadership at home to bring progress to the talks. They should also ask themselves whether they fought the temptations of protectionism and opponents of trade liberalization and tackled painful reforms in a serious manner.... Are the WTO negotiations dead? We do not think they are. Many countries share the ideal of free trade; what is needed is the political will to put it into action. We are hopeful that the talks will reopen as soon as possible."

SCHIEFFER